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Director Sec'y ____

FBI Didn't Report Oswald Wife Tap

New York Times News Service

The FBI tapped the telephones and bugged the living quarters used by Marina Oswald after the assassination of President Kennedy, but it failed to report either the fact of the surveillance or its product to investigators for the Warren Commission, according to a former FBI official.

The official, who was closely involved with the investigation conducted by the Bureau in the wake of the assassination, said that the electronic surveillance was instituted on the Russian-born Mrs. Oswald shortly after her husband, Lee Harvey Oswald, was identified as the principal suspect in Kennedy's murder.

The surveillance, the former official said, continued for "some months" after the death of Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963, and the killing of Oswald himself two days later by Jack Ruby, a Dallas nightclub operator.

BUT HE SAID that, to the best of his recollection, the surveillance never produced information that bore directly on Oswald's motives or supported suspicions held by some FBI officials that he had been involved in a conspiracy against the president's life. It was those suspicions, the former official said, that prompted the bureau to initiate its electronic "coverage" of Mrs. Oswald.

The FBI said in a statement yesterday afternoon that the agency had "conducted an electronic surveillance of Marina Oswald's residence from Feb. 29, 1964, to March 12, 1964, based upon written approval of the attorney general of the United States."

At the time, the government contended that in "national security" cases court permission was not required.

THE FBI did not deal with its reported failure to inform the Warren Commission of the eavesdropping effort.

None of the volumes of testimony or evidence published by the Warren Commission contain any hint that commission lawyers were told by the FBI of its surveillance of Mrs. Oswald.

Key commission counsel and investigators confirmed that they could not remember having been told that her conversations had been monitored.

David W. Belin, a Des Moines lawyer who was an assistant counsel to the commission, said that if this account was accurate, "it strikes me as horrible" that the commission was left uninformed.

HIS SENTIMENTS were shared by Albert E. Jenner Jr., also a former assistant commission counsel and now a Chicago lawyer, who said that whether the surveillance of Mrs. Oswald had come out "positive or negative," the panel should have been allowed to weigh whatever information was gleaned.

The commission, named for Earl Warren, the late chief justice who acted as its chairman, was set up by former President Lyndon B. Johnson within a week of Kennedy's death, with instructions to determine the circumstances that surrounded the assassination.

The Washington Post ____
Washington Star-News A-32
Daily News (New York) ____
The New York Times ____
The Wall Street Journal ____
The National Observer ____
The Los Angeles Times ____

Date 10-30-75

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